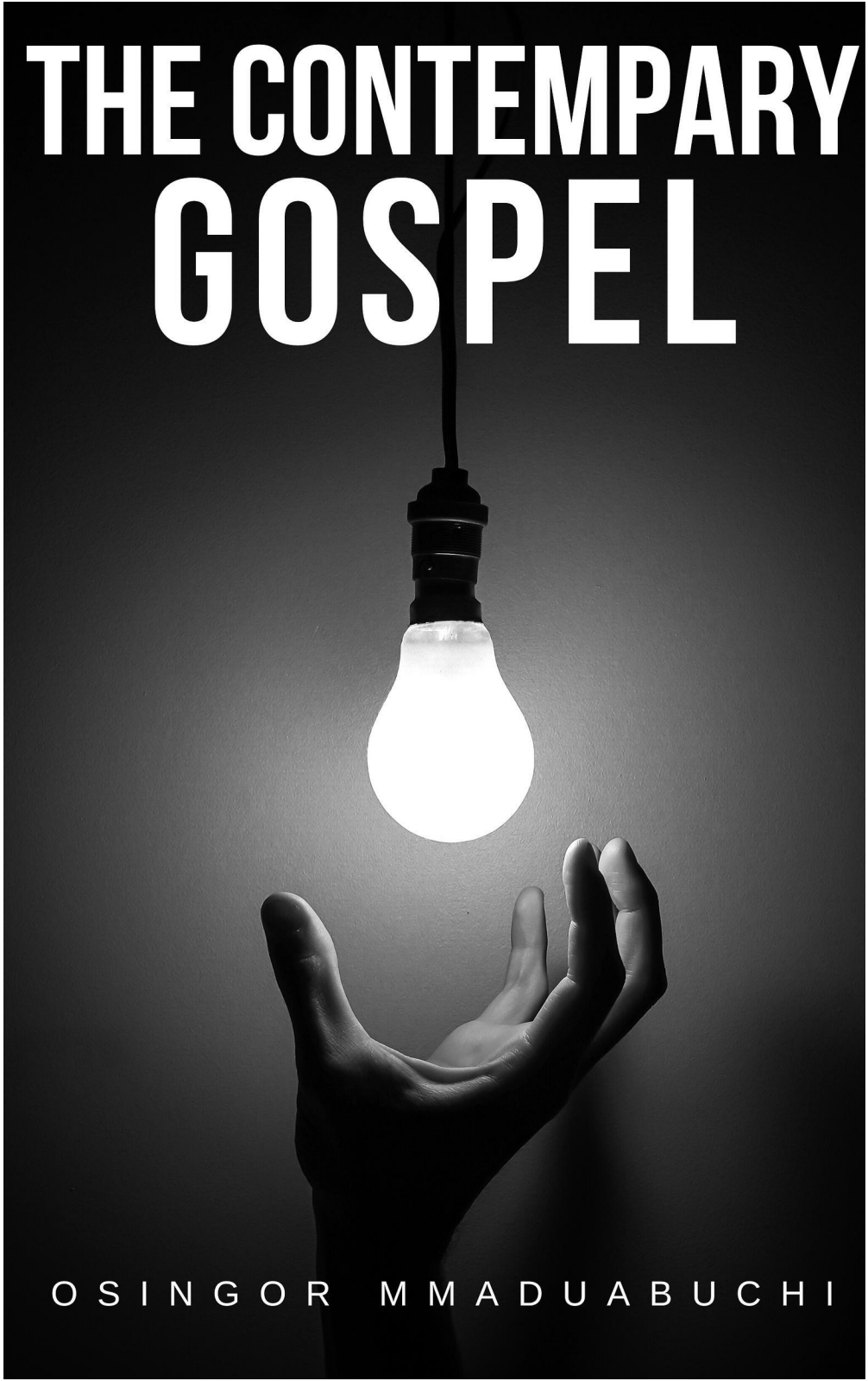
THE CONTEMPARY GOSPEL



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THE CONTEMPORARY GOSPEL

Reflective News

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TO PEOPLE OF GOODWILL. TO MY MOTHER. I LOVE YOU MUM.

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Acknowledgments

I THANK GOD FOR WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING IN WRITING THIS REFLECTIVE BOOK.

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TO MY CLASSMATES ESPECIALLY MONSIGNOR NEIL, GOD BLESS YOU ALL

The Southeast is in Prison with Nnamdi Kanu: justice delayed is not justice denied.

My name is Mmaduabuchi, and I'm an Igbo boy from Anambra State, Nigeria studying here in the Philippines. Every time I scroll through news from the Southeast, (Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, Anambra) and it feels like the whole region is crying. This past week, the big story was Nnamdi Kanu's fight. On November 11, he finally got his full case file after years in jail. The man is facing terrorism charges, but to us, it looks like punishment for speaking for all the Igbos. He wrote to President Trump, saying there's a hidden genocide against Christians in the Southeast. My friends from Owerri send videos of unknown gunmen raiding homes. One in Abakaliki university of science and technology says farmers can't go to their yam barns because of herdsmen. In Enugu, markets close early because of fear. The pain is not just Anambra's, it's the whole Southeast shaking.

I read the Gospel for last Sunday, Luke 21:5-19, and Jesus spoke to every town in the Southeast. He said people will arrest you, hate you, drag you to court because of His name (justice), but don't be afraid. "Not a hair on your head will be destroyed. Hold on, and you'll save your lives." When I think of Kanu in detention since 2021, I see the whole Southeast in that prison. The government calls IPOB (Indigenous People of Biafra) terrorists, but my brother says the real terror is when gunmen burn churches and nothing happens. Jesus talked about wars and earthquakes, these are our signs. The Southeast is in labor pain, waiting for something new.

This reading pushes me. I get mad when people say "let Kanu rot." Jesus says don't answer hate with hate. Just hold on. That means praying for my brothers and sisters in the southeast, sharing true stories with encouragement, not adding lies.

Hope is big. Kanu is still appealing to the Supreme Court. We survived the Biafra war, we'll survive this. God sees every tear from Onitsha to Afikpo, from Nnewi to Umuahia, and every town and villages in the southeast

Jesus said the Temple will fall, but God's kingdom stands. Nigeria's system may crack, but Southeast hope won't. We hold on together, Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo. And we'll

be okay.

17th November, 2025.

president Tinubu. The master strategist.

A Laborer Deserves His wages: A call for Action

Reflecting on the recent **Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)** protests that filled the streets of Abuja on February 3, 2026, it is impossible to ignore the profound resonance between the socio-economic struggle of the Nigerian worker and the spiritual imperatives found in Scripture.

As thousands gathered to rally for livable wages and voice their grievances against the skyrocketing cost of living, my thoughts turned to the liturgical readings from the **Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**, specifically the prophetic words of **Zephaniah 2:3 and 3:12-13**.

The Cry for Justice and the Prophetic Call

In the face of an economy that feels increasingly weighted against the average citizen, Zephaniah's exhortation to *"seek justice, seek humility"* feels less like an ancient suggestion and more like an urgent mandate for the present day.

- **The Struggle:** The protesters in Abuja aren't just demanding numbers on a paycheck; they are demanding the dignity that comes with being able to provide for one's family.
- **The Promise:** The prophet speaks of a "remnant" of people—the humble and the lowly—who shall find refuge in the name of the Lord. This biblical "preferential option for the poor" creates a direct bridge to the NLC's cries for economic fairness.

Faith in Action

The intersection of faith and current events reminds us that spirituality cannot be divorced from the lived reality of our neighbors. If God sides with the humble and promises protection to the afflicted, then a person of faith cannot remain a passive observer when workers are pushed to the brink of despair.

"But I will leave you meek and humble. The remnant of Israel will trust in the name of the Lord." **— Zephaniah 3:12**

This passage underscores a vital truth: **Humility is not passivity.** In this context, it is the strength of a people who know their worth and peacefully demand that their society reflects the justice of God.

A Personal Commitment

The news from Abuja serves as a sobering catalyst for my own life. It pushes me beyond mere sympathy toward a more active, intentional compassion. To act with compassion in my daily life means:

1. **Advocacy:** Speaking out against policies that disproportionately harm the vulnerable.
2. **Solidarity:** Recognizing that the struggle of the worker in the street is a reflection of a collective moral responsibility.
3. **Humility:** Approaching every interaction with the awareness that we are called to be the "refuge" for one another that Zephaniah speaks of.

Ultimately, the protests are a call to conscience. They remind me that the work of the Gospel is often done on the pavement, in the heat of the sun, and in the persistent pursuit of a world where no one is left behind.

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construction workers

The Ash: A Call For Transformation

Current local news and liturgical reading corresponding with it

Report: Osingor Mmaduabuchi MichaelMary

Date: 18th February, 2026

Reflecting on the news of the day alongside the **Ash Wednesday** readings of February 18, 2026, hits close to the heart. There is a startling parallel between the spiritual call for authenticity and the national cry for transparency in Nigeria's democratic journey.

The Call for Internal Transformation

The readings from **Joel 2:12-18** urge us to *"return to me with all your heart,"* emphasizing a fast that involves "rending hearts, not just garments." This is echoed in **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18**, where Jesus warns against practicing piety for show. Both passages point to a singular truth: outward displays are hollow without a sincere, hidden conversion of the soul.

In a digital age where every act can be curated for social media, Lent challenges us to ask: **Is our "goodness" for the spotlight, or is it for the truth?**

The National Stage: Reform or Performance?

This spiritual tension connects powerfully with the recent passage of the **Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill 2026**. While the National Assembly has officially approved the electronic transmission of results to the **IReV portal**, the decision to retain manual fallback options has sparked a firestorm.

- **The Conflict:** Protests and walkouts in the House, coupled with police using tear gas on demonstrators in Abuja, highlight a deep-seated fear.
- **The Worry:** Critics argue that without mandatory, real-time uploads, the "fallback" becomes a loophole that weakens the transparency promised for the 2027 elections.

As an APC majority prevailed over an outcry from the opposition and civil society, the question of "authenticity" shifts from the altar to the floor of the National Assembly.

Seeking Integrity in the Digital Age

In our age of instant news and viral protests, analyses flood social media, shaping opinions in seconds. Yet, the Ash Wednesday liturgy pulls us back to a deeper inquiry.

Are our legislative reforms and public debates genuine pursuits of justice? Are we "rending our hearts" for the common good, or are these political maneuvers merely performative shows for power, "likes," and international appearances—the very hypocrisy Jesus condemns?

A Prayer for Nigeria

As a Nigerian, I feel this struggle deeply. True electoral integrity demands a sincere, humble commitment to the truth that exists away from the political theater or the online spotlight.

- **Lent invites us to pray** for our leaders and our people.
- **Our goal is a democracy** where every vote counts, and where the system reflects God's mercy and justice rather than mere outward displays of "reform."

May we return to God with undivided hearts this season. May our actions be as transparent as the future we hope for.

May Nigeria win.

Ash Wednesday with Bishop Julius

The Architecture of Integrity

On this day, Nigerian headlines were dominated by two urgent calls for structural integrity: the National Assembly's demand for the Federal Government to **name and prosecute terrorism financiers**, and the growing clamor from stakeholders for **legal backing for the IReV portal** and electronic result transmission. Simultaneously, the new Minister of Defence, General Christopher Musa, candidly admitted to "gaps within the armed forces" that needed urgent closing.

The Liturgy (Thursday, 1st Week of Advent):

- **First Reading (Isaiah 26:1-6):** "A strong city have we… Open up the gates to let in a nation that is just, one that keeps faith."
- **Gospel (Matthew 7:21, 24-27):** The parable of the **two builders**—one who builds on rock and one who builds on sand.

The Connection

: The readings of this Advent week focus on the foundation of a "Just Nation." Isaiah speaks of a city with walls of salvation, but those gates only open for a nation that "keeps the truth." In Nigeria, the demand to name terrorism financiers is an attempt to stop building our security on the "sand" of secrets and compromise.

Jesus' warning in Matthew is a stark reminder to our leaders: any reform—whether electoral (IReV) or military—that lacks a foundation of transparency and "doing the will of the Father" (justice for the people) is a house built on sand. When the "floods" of insecurity and economic hardship come, only the institutions built on the "rock" of truth and accountability will stand

The Cost of Peace and the Leprosy of Injustice

This date marked **Armed Forces Remembrance Day** and the 60th anniversary of Nigeria's first military coup (1966). President Tinubu and State Governors across the federation laid wreaths at cenotaphs, honoring those who paid the ultimate price. Amid the ceremonies, there were loud calls for better welfare for veterans and widows, reminding the nation that honor must go beyond annual speeches to "year-round support."

The Liturgy (Thursday, 1st Week in Ordinary Time):

- **First Reading (1 Samuel 4:1-11):** The Israelites take the Ark of the Covenant into battle as a "lucky charm," but because of their internal corruption, they are defeated, and the Ark is captured.
- **Gospel (Mark 1:40-45):** The healing of the **leper** who kneels before Jesus saying, "If you will, you can make me clean."

The Connection:

The tragedy of January 15, 1966, and the subsequent Civil War are deep scars on the Nigerian soul—a form of national "leprosy" that isolated and pained us for years. Just as the leper in the Gospel knelt for healing, our Remembrance Day is a national kneeling. We acknowledge our need for a "cleansing" from the tribalism and corruption that led to past coups.

The reading from 1 Samuel offers a sobering warning: symbols of power (like the Ark, or in our case, military parades and emblems) cannot save a nation if the heart is far from God. The Israelites lost the battle because they treated the Ark as a political tool rather than a call to holiness. Our tribute to fallen heroes is hollow if we do not "cleanse" the system of the "leprosy" of neglect that leaves their families in poverty. True remembrance is an act of healing the living as much as it is honoring the dead.

Conclusion: A Call to "Rend the Heart"

Whether we are debating the legalities of an electronic portal in December or laying wreaths in January, the message of the Liturgy is consistent: **Authenticity over Appearance.** Nigeria's path to "winning" lies not in the "sand" of performative politics, but in the "rock" of sincere justice. As we move through the seasons of Advent and Ordinary Time, we are reminded that our democracy will only reflect God's mercy when we, as a people and as leaders, choose the "hidden conversion" of the heart over the viral display of the spotlight.

About the Author

Mmmaduabuchi was born and raised from the family of late Mr George and Mrs Chinyere Osingor. He is a student of Ab major in Philosophy and minor in communication.